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Sons and nephews of chiefs are not allowed to tree-cut because of the danger, and hence sometimes find themselves almost destitute in old age under modern conditions. Tree-climbing is not an art which can be acquired in later years. Bemba ritual reflects their apprehension over tree-cutting. It will be seen that the prayers said at the beginning of the *ukutema* season, make constant demands for the safety of the men who climb the trees (pp. 366–72).

Nevertheless, the Bemba particularly pride themselves on this *icitemene* system. They constantly brag of their climbing feats as they talk together round the fire, the morning's trees growing taller and taller in retrospect. 'Look at that man! He is an absolute monkey!'[1] is a high compliment to pay to a cultivator. Young men try to go out together to cut trees (*ukuteme cima*), and when the chief's gardens are being cleared as many as thirty or forty boys sometimes work together on the first day.

The young men seize their axes, and rush whooping up the trees, squabbling as to who should take the highest trunk. They dare each other to incredible feats and fling each other taunts as they climb. Each falling branch is greeted with a special triumph cry. I collected about forty different *ukutema* cries at the cutting of Citimukulu's and Mwamba's gardens in 1933–4. These are formalized boastings like the praise-songs commonly shouted before a Bantu chief. The cutter likens himself to an animal who climbs high, or to a fierce chief who mutilates his subjects, cutting off their limbs like the branches of this tree. A squirrel might be afraid of such a tree, he says, but not he! 'The wind failed to bring down this trunk! But look at me!' Each shout is followed by a prolonged whoop of E-e-eh![2] The noise is deafening for the first half-hour,

[1] *Moneni.uyu! Ni kolwe uine uine!*

[2] The cries I collected at Mwamba's village (13.v.33) and near Shiwa Dandu (18.vii. 33) show (*a*) six comparisons between the climbing man and different animals, e.g.

Fulwe tamina-lelo anina ku mukolobondo.—The tortoise does not climb—but to-day he climbs the *mukolobondo* tree. Native comment: This means that a man is afraid to climb, but then he is jealous of his friends who climb so well, and so he begins to learn, and now he can climb, i.e., even the tortoise who cannot climb at all is spurred to efforts against his usual customs.

Kabundi kamunina mfwa. Bacunga balanina no kubwelele.—The lemur climbs to his death, but the night ape climbs and comes back. Native comment: 'See how people who climb take the habits of animals. The *kabundi* is an animal who climbs to the top of a tree even if it falls and is killed, but the *bacunga* runs up a little way and comes back. The man who wants to climb a high tree is not

754 of magical forces in sorcery. The *muloshi* is a man who kills without rhyme or reason, an enemy of society who kills from a distance, who is associated with black birds and who steals parts of the body from newly dug graves.(1) Enemies may also be killed by the use of medicine, either apparently by an evilly disposed person or by the *Ng'anga* who may be employed to defend someone who believes he is attacked.(2)

831 372 *Sex and Fire.* Characteristic of this group of peoples is the series of beliefs associated with the magic potency of sex when used according to certain rules, and, connected with this, the danger of the pollution of domestic fires or the fires of chiefs by contact with adulterers or evil livers. Such beliefs are the basis of the multiplication of small protective rites associated with chieftainship, the bringing-up of children, and the girls' initiation ceremony.(3)

SOME IMPORTANT RITUALS

788 241 The most important ceremonies carried out amongst the Bemba are as follows:-

(1) *Economic Rites.* At the time of the firing of the bush the chief or headman places an axe at the head of his bed at night or, in the case of a chief, in the relic shrine. Sowing ceremonies at the Paramount's capital used to be elaborate, but are now reduced to the placing of seeds in the relic shrines; similar ceremonies are done by headmen. The first-fruits rites, when the tasting of the new crops takes place, were also formerly elaborate among the Bemba. They are still carried out in an abbreviated form at the capital, and headmen place in their small spirit huts portions of each new crop.

766 782 (2) *Ceremonial in Chieftainship.* The most elaborate forms of ceremonial amongst the Bemba are those that surround the burial of a dead chief, the installation of his successor and the moving of his village. In the old days the death of a Paramount Chief was concealed for a few days while his followers fled from the capital and the sacred relics were moved to a place of safety. The ritual buriers then took charge and dried the body and covered it with a sauce made of beans, carefully preserving the toe and finger nails. After a year the corpse was carried round the Paramount's territory and human victims were sacrificed on each spot where the body rested at night. The body was then carried across the Chambasi river where it was received by the *shimwalule* who carried it into the sacred grove. The favourite wives of the chief and some of his slaves were put into the grave to hold the body of the *Citimukulu* and were stifled as the earth was filled in. Although cattle are not kept in the area, the body was wrapped in the skin of an ox.

643 The installation of a chief is a similarly complex process, in which all the *bakabilo* and *bafingo* play their part. Important elements were the transfer of the sacred relics to the new capital, the lighting of the chief's new fire, and the installation of his head wife. Details of this form of ceremonial are not available from the associated tribes, but it is certain that

(1) For some comments on the relation between witchcraft and psychopathology, see Davidson, 1949.
(2) Richards, 2, 1935. (3) Richards, 7, 1940.

643 [551] Chitimukulu was head. The Chitimukulu is the oldest name of a royal chief. It is the name carried by the most senior member of the crocodile totem and as such it demands the most respect. The sway of a Chitimukulu is as much moral and spiritual as temporal. His temporal power too is the greatest of the chiefs. He lives in and rules Lubemba, the stronghold of the tribe, and in the beginning all appointments of chiefs to help him hold the widening sphere of Bemba rule came from him. He also has the largest number of people in his own area.

622 The Mwamba only appears as a hereditary chief two generations before the present lineage and his area and population are still much smaller than the Paramount's, even after some Mwambas have increased their power by war against the Paramount. Thus by tradition and age the Mwamba is second to the Paramount though at various times he has made himself politically independent of the Paramount (5).

The Nkula is the most recent of the main appointments. I tell the history of it in Section 2 and the high status is no doubt partly due to the fact that the modern Nkula is a continuation of a chieftainship once held by a senior house. I believe also that geography has helped to make him so powerful as well as the fact that the house now is that of the second senior mother. The Chambeshi is said to be a religious boundary as well as a [643] geographical one. A Paramount has occasionally crossed it but only after ●788] performing a ceremony including the dropping of beads into the river. Thus Nkula has built up a geographical power to the east of the Chambeshi. The genealogical drift of the Mukukamfumu branch of the clan away from the Paramountcy has emphasised his independence. But the age of his title puts him below Mwamba in status although now his population is much larger.

[551] The name Nkolemfumu is older than Nkula but the reason Nkula is now higher in status is because there has been a gap in the continuity of the Nkolemfumu name and because the Nkula now has part of the area that was the care of Nkolemfumu. The old Nkolemfumu lived to the west of the Chambeshi, as now, but his sway stretched across into part of what is now Nkula's country. When Chitimukulu Chileshye Chepela A2 usurped the throne an Nkolemfumu had just died. Chileshye A2 had no one to send to inherit the place (Bwembia A2 was a fool) so he brought all the *babenye* relics and gave them to the care of Mwamba who also took over most of the area. When Chitapankwa B4 became Chitimukulu he usurped the Nkula for his family, giving his brother Sampa B4 as Nkula I the old Nkolemfumu area to the east of the Chambeshi. Later he re-created a smaller Nkolemfumu which he gave to Mubanga Chipoya C2, who thus became Nkolemfumu I of a new lineage.

551 554 622 643 There is thus no doubt about the traditional order of status of the three leading names. Chitimukulu is first, Mwamba is second and Nkula third. Beyond that I doubt if it is possible to say more than that status perhaps follows genealogical closeness to the Paramountcy. The Mwamba probably will stick as second, even in genealogical closeness, from now on, but Nkula comes third in status by tradition as well as in modern importance however far away to the right he may be on a genealogical table.

622 The Nkolemfumu succession has gone fairly regularly since Mubanga Chipoya C2, the first of the name in the new lineage. When he died, Mutale Sichansa C3 and Chikwanda C6 were involved in the Nkula and Chikwanda

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'feed his people' and actually does so if they are in need, besides dispensing hospitality to strangers.

The head of the village acts as its ritual head. In the old days, he put up one village shrine to his own ancestors and one or more others to the dead chiefs of the land. This is still done in out-of-the-way parts of the country and in most places, I think, prayers are offered to these tutelary deities, whether shrines are built to them or no. The headman, like the chief, also influences the life of the community through his own person. He must 'warm the bush' (*ukukafye mpanga*) by an act of ritual intercourse with his wife before the huts of a new village are occupied. He blesses seeds for sowing, axes for tree-cutting, and first-fruits. His fire stands for the life of the community as a whole and must be ritually lighted when occasion demands. He presides over the special divination rites connected with village activities, such as the founding of a new community or the death of a member, and blesses new babies or individuals who are sick.

In the political hierarchy, the headman has his definite place. No Bemba may cultivate land except as a member of a village group, and the headman is responsible for organizing the supply of tribute and labour which must be paid to a chief by the community as a whole. He accompanies his villagers to court when they have cases to present and often speaks for them. He transmits the orders of a chief to his people and nowadays those of the Government. His prerogatives are few in number. As head of a kinship-group, he can command personal service from his younger relatives and should be able to exact one day's work from his people on the first day of tree-cutting and sowing. He is always given tribute of beer or meat. But probably, apart from these few economic privileges, the Bemba headman values most his position of authority, his small following, and the favour of his chief.

The sanctions for his authority nowadays are mainly his popularity, together with the strength of kinship feeling, and the belief of the Bemba that it is dangerous to allow an older relative to die injured. His supernatural powers were a source of strength in the old days, but to a very small extent now, and it must be admitted that the forces which keep a village together are not very strong. It is a constant fear to a headman that his people will melt away.

(*b*) *The Chief*. The functions of the different types of chief

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differ only in degree. All are said to look after their people, to 'work the land', and, with reference to their supernatural powers, to 'spit blessings over the land' (*ukufunga mate*). Their political duties consist in the administration of their capitals and also of their territories as a whole. A large *umusumba* means plenty of coming and going, enough workers for joint enterprises, a large panel of advisers for court cases, many messengers to keep in touch with the surrounding villages—in short, the possibility of keeping the tribal machine running. To maintain and even augment such a community by his popularity and his reputation for generosity is one of the chief's important political tasks. He has also to keep contact with the people widely dispersed over his *icalo* and to appoint new headmen, amalgamate old villages, and decide as to the selection of heirs to old titles. On his success in these last duties the integration of his people as a political unit largely depends.

As a judicial authority, the chief presides over his court with advisers selected from his village, and in the old days he alone could hear charges of witchcraft and, in the case of the greater territorial chiefs, put the accused to the poison ordeal (*mwafi*). In the economic sphere, he initiates agricultural activities by performing the customary ceremony before each begins; he makes big gardens with the aid of tribute labour from which he is able to fill large granaries and thus find the wherewithal to feed his following; he controls directly certain fishing and hunting enterprises: and he criticizes and directs the gardening work of his own villagers.[1]

The ritual duties of a chief consist in the observation of the taboos for the protection of his own person and the safety of the sacred relics at his disposal, and the carrying out of a number of rites for the sake of his whole *icalo*—in the case of the paramount, for the whole tribe. These last consist of economic rites, tree-cutting, sowing, and first-fruit ceremonies, those performed in case of national calamity, and for success in war in the old days. He was formerly bound to protect the people from witches and used to employ a special doctor at his court to destroy, by burning, the bodies of those found guilty of this offence.

In the old days the chief organized military expeditions,

[1] cf. my *Land, Labour, and Diet in Northern Rhodesia* (1939), chap. xiii, for a full account of the chief's economic powers.